

more than 500 sites throughout North America to keep the light of hope burning for homeless youth. Covenant House provides quality, effective care for homeless and runaway youth and we are proud that our State of New York is home to Covenant House's headquarters.

Emergency health care, shelter, and treatment of the homeless in New York City cost an average of \$40,000 per person each year, placing a staggering and unsustainable social and economic burden on State and local governments. Covenant House, the Nation's largest privately funded agency for homeless youth and young adults, is helping to relieve some of this burden by providing resident and non-resident services to nearly 66,000 youths in 2006 alone.

Covenant House has provided more than 1 million young people with the support necessary to transition from life on the streets to a life with a future. Covenant House uses successful programs and services—including counseling, transitional living programs, educational and vocational training, health services, and drug abuse treatment and prevention programs—that help transform the lives of these individuals at an early stage.

Still, more work needs to be done. As we speak, nearly 1.3 million children and young adults are homeless and living on the streets throughout our Nation, with roughly 5,000 of these youth dying from assault, illness, or suicide. The Candlelight Vigil for Homeless Youth will honor the memory of these young people who have died alone and anonymously while living on our streets and raise awareness about growing crisis of youth homelessness. As Sister Tricia, executive director of Covenant House, has said, "The Vigil is for every kid who runs away, convinced they'll be safer on the street than at home, where they hope to escape abusive or dangerous environments. That's why we stand together with candles, to light their way to Covenant House, where they will be safe, treated with dignity and loved without condition."

Many of the youth living and dying on our Nation's streets are former foster care children who have aged out of the system. Though they are too old for the foster care system, they are often too young and ill prepared for self-sufficient living without the assistance of a family or support system. Unemployment and a lack of education among these young people can lead to a life of poverty, crime, and drug abuse. The challenges facing young men and women today are overwhelming. For youth who are faced with a life on the streets, the need for a guiding light is often a matter of life and death.

The Covenant House has used successful programs to help transform the lives of these individuals at an early stage. Senator SCHUMER and I are pleased to stand with Covenant House as together we work to keep the light

of hope burning bright for all of our young people.●

(At the request of Mr. REID, the following statement was ordered to be printed in the RECORD.)

VISIT OF THE JAPANESE PRIME MINISTER

● Mr. OBAMA. Mr. President, I rise to extend my welcome to Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda of Japan, who is visiting Washington today.

Japan is a critical ally and friend of the United States. I believe our alliance is fundamental to a peaceful and prosperous Asia-Pacific region.

The Prime Minister's visit comes at an important time. It is crucial that our two countries maintain the positive momentum in our relationship and work closely together to accomplish shared goals, such as denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, stability in South Asia, nonproliferation in Iran, and political reform in Burma. As a long-standing ally, we must consult closely and respect Japan's perspectives, even as we contemplate next steps in our negotiations with nations like North Korea.

Thousands of miles away from the Korean peninsula, we face the resurgence of the Taliban and al-Qaida in Afghanistan and in the border regions of Pakistan. We are all too familiar with the reports that suggest the Taliban and al-Qaida are gaining strength. We were reminded of this fact in an unsettling report in Tuesday's Washington Post, but the most troubling report of all was last July, when the declassified National Intelligence Estimate warned of a persistent and growing threat from a reconstituted al-Qaida sanctuary in northwest Pakistan.

It is therefore critical that the U.S. and its partners in the international community, including Japan, maintain our focus and operations in this region.

In particular, I wanted to extend to the Prime Minister my appreciation for the support that Japan's Self Defense Forces have offered U.S. operations in Afghanistan, and hope Japan's deployment of refueling tankers will quickly be reauthorized and be extended.

Our half century alliance with Japan remains vital, based on common values and shared interests. There is ample room for improved efforts to forge an even stronger and enduring global security partnership. I hope that Prime Minister Fukuda's visit will continue the progress toward that goal.●

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

IN RECOGNITION OF PROFESSORS OF THE YEAR

● Mr. ALLARD. Mr. President, I wish to congratulate the four national winners of the U.S. Professors of the Year Award. Since 1981, this program has sa-

luted outstanding undergraduate instructors throughout the country. This year, a State Professor of the Year was also recognized in 40 States and the District of Columbia.

This award is recognized as one of the most prestigious honors bestowed upon a professor. To be nominated for this award requires dedication to the art of education and excellence in every aspect of the profession. Professors personally vested in each student shape the leaders of tomorrow. These individuals should be proud of their accomplishment.

I commend and thank all the winners for your leadership and passion for educating. No doubt you have inspired an untold number of students. I wish you the very best in all your endeavors. Congratulations and best regards.

The four national award winners are:

Outstanding Baccalaureate Colleges Professor of the Year: Glenn W. Ellis, associate professor of engineering, Smith College, Northampton, MA;

Outstanding Community Colleges Professor of the Year: Rosemary M. Karr, professor of mathematics, Collin County Community College, Plano, TX;

Outstanding Doctoral and Research Universities Professor of the Year: Christopher M. Sorensen, University Distinguished Professor of Physics, Kansas State University, Manhattan, KS;

Outstanding Master's Universities and Colleges Professor of the Year: Carlos G. Spaht, professor of mathematics, Louisiana State University in Shreveport, Shreveport, LA.

State winners are:

Alabama: Lawrence Davenport, professor of biology, Samford University;

Arizona: John M. Lynch, honors faculty fellow, Arizona State University;

Arkansas: Jay Barth, associate professor of politics, Hendrix College;

California: Andrew Fraknoi, professor of astronomy, Foothill College;

Colorado: Thomas G. McGuire, associate professor of English and fine arts, U.S. Air Force Academy;

Connecticut: Marc Zimmer, Kohn professor of chemistry, Connecticut College;

District of Columbia: Richard P. Tollo, associate professor of geology, the George Washington University;

Florida: Patrick K. Moore, public history program director and associate professor, University of West Florida;

Georgia: Linda Stallworth Williams, associate professor of English, North Georgia College & State University;

Idaho: Heidi Reeder, associate professor of communication, Boise State University;

Illinois: Steven A. Meyers, professor of psychology, Roosevelt University;

Indiana: Kristen L. Mauk, Kreft professor of nursing, Valparaiso University;

Iowa: Gail Romberger Nonnecke, professor of horticulture, Iowa State University;

Kansas: David Littrell, university distinguished professor of music, Kansas State University;

Kentucky: Carol Holzhausen Hunt, professor of English and women's studies, Bluegrass Community and Technical College;

Louisiana: Carol E. O'Neil, Peltier professor of dietetics, Louisiana State University and A&M College;

Maine: Robert A. Strong, university foundation professor of investment education, University of Maine;